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Christmas spirits high

Archie Stouffer Elementary School hosted its Christmas concert on Wednesday last week. The gymnasium was packed with supportive loved ones and the kids had a blast. See more photos inside. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Council will revisit tower lease agreement

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

The transfer of a communications tower ownership in Minden Hills has broached questions about insurance.

The township owns the land on Scotch Line where the radio communications tower for the Minden Hills Fire Department and Public Works repeaters are located.

The tower is currently owned by a group called Netcom and they lease the property from the township and maintain the tower.

Township council heard Dec. 12 that Netcom's owners are looking to retire and hope to transfer ownership of the tower to Kirk Chatten of Bearcom. Basically, they'd like to have Bearcom take Netcom's place within the lease agreement.

see TRANSFER page 3

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Osprey named official bird of Kawartha Lakes

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

An osprey lands near or its nest in the wetlands of the City of Kawartha Lakes. /Submitted

On Tuesday, Nov. 19, the osprey was named the official bird of the City of Kawartha Lakes.

In March of 2024, the City of Kawartha Lakes became a Bird Friendly City through a collaboration with Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes and Nature Canada. With an osprey being represented on the logo of the City of Kawartha Lakes, the bird has already been a key element to the their branding and identity.

The genesis of Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes at a Fleming Bird Day event held by Fleming College's student-lead Fleming Bird Conservation Committee (FBCC) in the fall of 2022. Thom Luloff, a professor in the Conservation Biology program, was also a member of Bird Friendly Peterborough. After their success in Peterborough being designated a Bird Friendly City in 2022, the group knew the City of Kawartha Lakes could follow Peterborough's example, says Chair of Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes Jamie Morris.

To become a designated Bird Friendly City, a 'Bird Team' is required to spearhead efforts.

Morris, a member of the City of Kawartha Lakes' Council-appointed Environmental Advisory Committee (KLEAC), organized people to have the first meeting in March of 2023. Participants were representatives from Fleming College, Kawartha Conservation, Kawartha Land Trust, Kawartha Field Naturalists, KLEAC, and Kawartha Bird Control. Together they formed the Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes coalition and set their first goal as becoming a certified Bird Friendly City.

"We felt we would be a strong candidate," said Morris. "Fleming's Frost Campus in Lindsay is a leader in environmental education, we have a number of energetic environmental organizations, and our amalgamated City has over 3000 square kilometers of lakes, forests, farmland, and small communities."

Morris says that Nature Canada sets the bar high for cities to receive their Bird Friendly City certification. Nature Canada supplies a 55-page application that highlights three key areas including mitigating threats to birds, protecting and restoring habitat, and education. While the application process takes a lot of time and effort, Morris says that it is well worth the effort. Nature Canada also supports applicants throughout the process. Luckily, the council was entirely on board with the idea, likely due to the lack of costs and how the certification fit their Strategic Plan.

"Certification has many benefits," said Morris. "It brought our various organizations together, created awareness of good work being done and where the gaps were. It also made us eligible for grants."

Since becoming a certified Bird Friendly City, Nature Canada has given grants for interpretive signage at Ken Reid Conservation Area in Lindsay and towards a new campaign that encourages cat owners to keep their cats inside.

The KLEAC now has a Bird Friendly Subcommittee that covers bird conservation work including bird conservation workshops and to determine bird friendly protection efforts like window protectors and protective plantings.

"The Environmental Advisory Council connection gives Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes a mechanism for putting resolutions in front of Council and access to support from the City's Communications Department," said Morris.

Through the City of Kawartha Lakes Jump-In website, an online poll with over 500 participants voted for the 2024 Bird of the Year. Other popular candidates included the black-capped chickadee, Northern cardinal, and barred owl. In 2022, the great blue heron was voted as Peterborough official city bird and the belted kingfisher was voted as Barrie's official bird this year.

While Morris loves all birds, they were"kinda rooting for the black-capped chickadee."

"They're here year-round, not at all shy (they will swoop in to take sunflower seeds from an open palm), help out other species with their alarm calls, and have marvelous abilities and adaptations. One example: They hide seeds and other food items to eat later, in thousands of different hiding spots. Hard to imagine (for someone like me, who has trouble remembering where he put his car keys) but they can actually remember the locations of those seeds. To make that possible, in the fall the brain's hippocampus (part responsible for spatial memory) grows by 30 per cent."

The osprey won by a landslide of votes. One advantage the osprey has is their impressive size, which can reach up to 183 centimeters, says Morris.

"They're less common than Black-capped Chickadee and Northern Cardinal. They really are magnificent birds–very hard to miss as they soar overhead and impossible to forget when you see one dive from a height to plunge into the water to seize fish in their specially-adapted talons. The stick-nests on platforms can be seen as you drive around the City."

"They're the only North American raptor with a diet of live fish and the ability to dive into water to catch them.

Morris also says that with the banning of DDT, the population of ospreys in the City of Kawartha Lakes and surrounding areas is increasing. Local groups have also created nesting platforms to support the nesting of ospreys.

Why is the City of Kawartha Lakes becoming a Bird Friendly City relevant to Haliburton County?

"There's a concept in birding of the 'spark bird' –the bird that sparks an interest that can turn into a lifelong passion. The Osprey could be that bird for a few. But more importantly, the general public learning to appreciate and value one bird can make them want to protect all birds from the dangers that are contributing to declining populations–roaming cats, window collisions, habitat loss, and learn about other birds."

Morris hopes this certification leads to protection of nesting sites, tree canopy cover, and by-laws preventing cats from predating on birds outside.

"The State of Canada's Birds" prepared by Birds Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada says that populations of birds of prey have increased 35 per cent since 1970, while grassland populations have declined by 67 per cent and aerial insectivores by 43 per cent.

"The osprey embodies the spirit of Kawartha Lakes—resilient, graceful, and deeply connected to our waterways," says Kawartha Lakes Mayor Doug Elmslie. "As a symbol of our commitment to conservation and community pride, and with its prominent role in our municipal branding, it's a perfect choice for our Official Bird. It's even more meaningful knowing that the community came together to vote for the osprey, highlighting how much it resonates with residents."

This May, Kawartha Lakes will host the first ever Bird Friendly Day. The event will be held around Migratory Bird Day with a number of bird walks, workshops, displays and other events throughout the City.

In the past, bird conservation workshops were held in Bobcaygeon, Fenelon Falls, and Lindsay. However, there has been mention of a collaboration between the Kawartha Lakes Library branches in Norland and Kinmount.

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Mayor pleads for generosity during Christmas

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

Minden Hills Mayor Bob Carter asks us to remember our neighbours during the yuletide season of giving.

If he had a Christmas wish, it would likely be that everybody think of others in their communities.

"Our food bank has seen unprecedented numbers of people who have been requiring assistance," Carter said during the Dec. 12 council meeting.

The Central Food Network's Food Rescue Program distributes more than 100,000 pounds of food annually. Hydro grants and firewood are provided to people throughout Haliburton County who are struggling with home energy.

When federal or provincial social programming falls short of adequately helping people, the crowd at the food banks hear about it first.

Another organization that provides meals in the area is SIRCH Community Services.

"And they are in need of some support and some funds," Carter said.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit recently declared food insecurity to be a public health issue. Living in a food insecure household increases risks to people's mental health, infections, and chronic diseases.

As many as 12.9 per cent of households in Haliburton County, 10.2 per cent of households in Kawartha Lakes, and 8.7 per cent of households in Northumberland County are considered low income and struggled to pay for rent, bills, and healthy food.

In the HKPR district area, 39.8 per cent of tenant-households spent more than 30 per cent of their income on housing.

"So when you're going around and doing your Christmas shopping and so on, please, if you can, remember those groups and give as generously as you can so that our fellow citizens can have hot meals," Carter said.

"Not only right now at this time of year, but throughout the winter season."

Transfer of ownership casues confusion

from page 1

Bearcom is the company that services, provides, and installs all of the communications equipment used by the Fire and Public Works departments.

Netcom pays an annual fee for the land, and it's hoped Bearcom would take over the payments and enter into a lease agreement with the township.

"We already do a great deal of business interactions with them, so it's just the simple matter of transferring the ownership," said Don Kruger, the municipality's fire chief.

Councillor Tammy McKelvey asked why the site has a $2 million insurance policy when the township carries $5 million in insurance for other assets.

Vicki Bull, the township's clerk, said $5 million policies are typically the norm.

"However, the $2 million was approved in a previous contract for the previous owner," Bull said. "And council actually did discuss that when we reviewed that contract at that time."

"I have a problem with that because we're causing everybody else to have $5 million (insurance policies) whether it's a builder or a contractor cutting grass," Coun. Ivan Ingram said. "I don't think they should be an exception. They should have to provide the $5 million as well."

"I would really like to see that changed to $5 million," McKelvey said. "This is our fire department's radio system, our roads department's radio system. This is important. I don't see the wisdom of $2 million, and the old agreement was 10 years old. Things have changed."

"We already have a long-term lease for this tower and for the site and the equipment," Kruger said. "If we were to reopen that lease, we would have to reopen all those negotiations."

"We're being asked to consider a lease agreement with this person," McKelvey said. "It's not even a limited company. I'm not sure I understand what you mean."

"We already have the lease agreement," Kruger said. "We're not changing the lease agreement. We're not proposing to change the lease agreement. We're just proposing changing the ownership."

"It was a 10-year term?" Mayor Bob Carter said.

"That is correct," Kruger said.

"And when did that start?" Carter said.

Kruger said the township entered into the lease before he started in his position. But, he said, the current council lowered the "lease amount" this year.

"We did discuss reducing the lease amount, definitely," McKelvey said. "This council approved that. This is a new lease being proposed for 10 years with a new company."

As such, she said she'd like council to have the insurance discussion so council can decide if there will be a change.

"I'm just trying to determine the necessity of finalizing this today as compared to the next meeting," Carter said.

"My understanding is that they (Netcom's owners) have basically retired already," Kruger said.

> "We're causing everybody else to have a $5 million (insurance policies) whether it's a builder or a contractor cutting grass."
>
> — COUNCILLOR IVAN INGRAM

Bull said there had been some procedural confusion by Netcom regarding the transfer of ownership.

"The same lease is before council that was proposed before," she said. "We didn't change anything in the lease."

Council took a break to "straighten out some of (the) details in the background," Carter said.

After the break, it was decided to defer the issues for discussion during a future meeting.

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NOTICE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS – 2025 BUDGET

The Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills is preparing its 2025 Municipal Budget. Council commenced its overview of the Draft Budget at the November 21, 2024, Special Meeting. Council will continue to consider the budget at several upcoming special meetings. The Adoption of the Water and Wastewater rates will be considered at the January 14, 2025, meeting. Please note that dates are subject to change and are dependent on deliberation and direction. For complete details, visit our website.

- **Tuesday, January 14, 2025:** Operating and Capital Budget review for the Fire Department; Public Works Department; Water and Wastewater; and Administration.
- **Thursday, January 16, 2025:** Operating and Capital Budget review for the Community Services Department; Planning Department; and Building Department.
- **Tuesday, February 4, 2025,** Adopt and Finalize the 2025 Budget.

SAFE WINTER DRIVING

Leave extra space when driving in icing conditions. Approach intersections slowly. Watch out for black ice - a thin, nearly invisible coat of ice that can make the road look like shiny new asphalt.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. Meetings begin at 9:00 am unless otherwise noted. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:
January 9 -Regular Council Meeting
January 30 – Regular Council Meeting
Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link on the Township CivicWeb Portal.

RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

New youth programs starting. Register for basketball, multi-sport, floor hockey and creative movement today! New drop-in program schedule starting on January 5th for the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena and Community Centre.

UPCOMING MUNICIPAL HOLIDAY HOURS

Municipal/Public Works/Fire Department Administration Offices
Dec 24th 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., CLOSED Dec 25th - Jan 1st
Cultural Centre/Agnes Jamieson Gallery
CLOSED Dec 24th - Jan 1st
Waste Disposal Sites
All Sites are CLOSED Dec 25th & Jan 1st.
Sites will operate on regular winter hours all other days.
SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena and Community Centre
Dec 24th 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Dec 31st 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
CLOSED Dec 25th, 26th & Jan 1st

WINTER PARKING

From Nov 1st to Apr 30th overnight parking is illegal from midnight to 8:00 AM on township roadways and parking lots. Parking in the turning circle of a cul-de-sac is prohibited during all hours. Vehicles parked in areas that interferes with snow removal will be towed away and/or ticketed at the owner's expense.

HOLIDAY RECYCLING TIPS

- Aluminum foil and trays, plastic containers, eggnog cartons, and metal cans go in with your containers recycling
- Paper gift bags, cardboard rolls, and Christmas cards, paper coffee cups can go with your paper recycling
- Foil wrapping paper, ribbons, tinsel, bows, plastic toy packaging all go in with your household garbage
- Lighting material can be recycled at the Scotch Line Landfill (Fluorescents, bulbs, Christmas lights etc.)

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT MINDEN HILLS

Your input is needed as we gather valuable feedback about Minden Hills from the community throughout December and January. We are looking for input from everyone so we can develop a Community Priority/Strategic Plan for the future.

- Online Survey – open until February 2, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. – https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MindenHillsSurvey
- Town Hall Sessions
    - In Person Town Hall on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena – Community Rooms 1 & 2 (55 Parkside St., Minden)
    - Virtual Town Hall on Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 7 p.m. contact lfitton@mindenhills.ca to register.

Help us shape the future for Minden Hills. Questions, please contact us at admin@mindenhills.ca.

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Coneybeare’s Butcher Shop continue ground beef initiative

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

For the month of December, Coneybeare’s Butcher Shop has reduced the price of their Ground Beef Initiative to five dollars per pound. The initiative in June of this year, with Coneybeare’s offering customers to add a pound of ground beef to their bill which would directly be donated to the Minden Community Food Centre.

“The demand is so much higher right now,” said Coneybeare.

Coneybeare says that the ground beef initiative is at-cost at five dollars per pound.

“We’ve always worked with the food bank and they’ve picked up ground beef from us before,” said Coneybeare. “It was kind of a mutual agreement.”

“It’s been great,” said Coneybeare. The more people hear about it, the more ground beef is donated to the Minden Community Food Centre. Over 100 pounds of ground beef has been donated to the Food Centre.

Approaching the Christmas season, Coneybeare says that their butcher shop has hundreds of turkeys go through their storage. Coneybeare also says that with the Christmas season, there is an increased demand for orders of ham, prime rib, and roast beef.

> Everyone wants something special for Christmas.
>
> — **MCKAY CONEYBEARE**

“Everyone wants someone special for Christmas. It is a lot of quantity and stuff you do not see all of the time,” said Coneybeare.

A big part of the butchering industry is minimizing food waste. Coneybeare uses trimmings from beef and pork for their ground beef and pork.

“It is about utilizing as much as you can,” said Coneybeare. “You don’t want to be putting too much in your scrap box and sending too much meat to the dump.”

All of the ground beef that is donated by Coneybeare’s Butcher Shop is made in-house.

“It is never out of a tube, it is always from a piece of beef, which is a big big difference from most grocery stores,” said Coneybeare. “You don’t know how many cows are in that tube or how long it has been frozen.”

Coneybeare says that his experience with meat has allowed him to notice the subtle qualities from meat cuts that make up ground beef. For example, the taste and texture of prime rib trim will have a softer mouth feel.

“I rarely order a steak at a restaurant,” said Coneyebare with a laugh.

“They are very appreciative,” said Coneybeare. “We are just happy to help as much as we can.”

Coneybeare’s Butcher Shop would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Coneybeare’s Butcher Shop will be closed Dec. 25 and 26. They will re-open on Dec. 26 and 27 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. respectively. They will be open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Dec. 30, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Dec. 31, and closed on New Year’s Day.

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Minden postal workers forced back to work

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

After nearly five weeks of striking through sleet and rain, CUPW Local 564 workers have been ordered back to work by the Canadian Industrial Relations Board.

On Dec. 13, Labour Minister Steven MacKinnon reported that the two parties are at an impasse. MacKinnon approached the Canada Industrial Relations Board regarding this impasse and concluded that all employees under CUPW to resume and continue operations and duties under an extension of the older agreement until May 22, 2025. An inquiry commission needed to be established, with a recommendation to MacKinnon required by May 15, 2025.

After two days of hearings, CIRB ordered CUPW employees to return to work on Tuesday, Dec. 17. A wage increase of 5 per cent was implemented with the pre-existing collective agreement being extended until May 22, 2025. All CUPW employees will receive a $1000 bonus before Christmas and $500 for temporary employees based on their number of hours.

Canada Post has said to expect delays well into 2025.

While striking, the CUPW Local 564 workers were paid only a fraction of their wages. The strikers were sympathetic to the concerns of small businesses, but they felt supported by the community, said Kelly Lawr, a CUPW Local 564 employee who works at the Minden and Haliburton locations. Adamant that their union representatives would find a fair deal, several strikers shared their concerns over their unstable income while striking.

"A lot of people are going to start looking for other jobs because we cannot afford to be off. We have bills to pay," said Jeanette Barry, a CUPW Local 564 employee. "It's a little disheartening to be honest. None of us really want to be out here in the first place but our collective agreement has been expired for over a year."

While Striking, Lawr shared her passion for her job and how that passion has been imprinted on her daughter.

"She sees how much I love my job, and she wants that," said Lawr. "It's rare to find a job that you love."

Lawr says that she can't see a future for her daughter working for Canada Post if they are not going to treat their employees fairly.

The biggest issue that CUPW Local 564 strikers discussed was that Canada Post is wanting to push dynamic routing. This would result in no postal workers having their own set routes, something that the workers say allows them to connect with the communities that they serve.

On Dec. 11, Canada Post released a statement saying that the CUPW's latest offer was "unaffordable and unsustainable" and says that their demands would cost $3 billion dollars over the next four years. Canada Post says that the dynamic routing would "allow it to plan and optimize delivery routes based on volumes, delivery addresses and pickups" and that dynamic routing is "necessary to secure its future and remain competitive."

Lawr and the strikers say that dynamic routing will take away the personalization, enforce a contribution benefit plan over a defined benefit plan and allow the company to restructure and cut employees.

> "We don't feel like future employees should have to fight for things that we have guaranteed in the past.
>
> — KELLY LAWR, CUPW LOCAL 564 EMPLOYEE"

"We don't feel like future employees should have to fight for things that we have guaranteed in the past," said Lawr. "In my personal opinion, if they are going to make cuts, it should be from the top."

Lawr says that during the COVID-19 pandemic, postal workers were deemed essential, but did not receive any extra compensation.

Lawr said that throughout the frequent talks between Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, she did not see any progress in the negotiations.

On Dec. 11, Canada Post responded to the union's request of a 19 per cent wage increase over the next four years, with an offer of 11.97 percent compounded wage increase over the next four years.

"The union's proposal remains well beyond what the Corporation can afford," writes the Canada Post press release.

When the striking first began, many people expressed thoughts to Lawr that Canada Post is outdated, unneeded in the community, and that other courier services are removing the need for Canada Post.

"It seems to be quite the opposite," said Lawr.

Small businesses, nonprofits, and community members were all affected by the postal strike. Many residents have expressed concerns regarding paying bills on time. After thirty years of receiving the bill in the mail, some cannot remember when they need to be paid. Several local nonprofits such as SIRCH conduct mail-outs for fundraising in December and have had their funding impacted due to the strike.

"It just goes to show that we are relevant, we do matter. What we do matters," said Lawr.

"It's very saddening that Canada Post used to be and always has been what they considered to be a middle-class good paying job. We are not ungrateful for what we have, we are very fortunate," said Lawr. "Unfortunately, with the economy, the way it is, it just doesn't cut it."

The strikers would like to let the community know that they are not paid through taxpayers' money. All their income is paid through services and sales through Canada Post. Canada Post is self-sufficient, and it is not federally funded.

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InOtherWords

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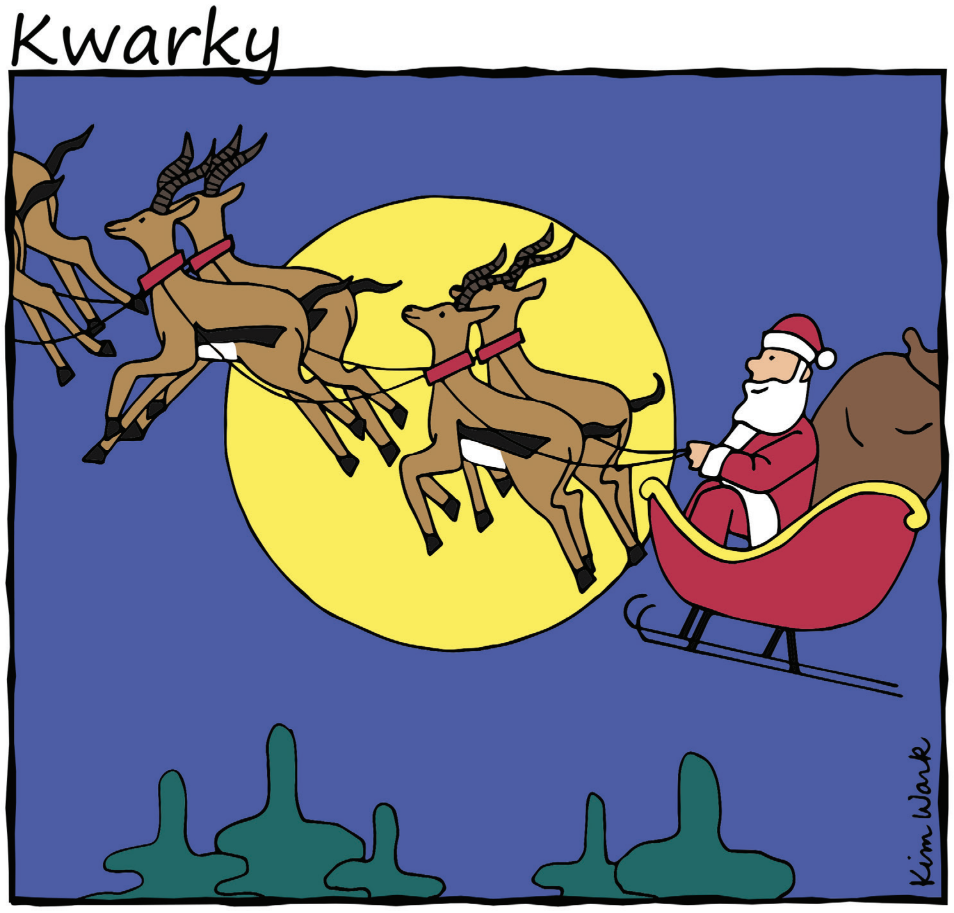


Climate Change Santa

Nasty weather

IN THE freezing rain the other week, my car slid off the road and slammed into the ditch.

I had just left our office in Haliburton early to avoid the inclement weather. Going over the hill before Wonderland Road, I hit some black ice, lost control, and slammed in the snow bank.

Instantly, I was stuck.

And embarrassed.

Thankfully, I was not injured at all. With the hood of my car covered in snow, I figured I should not sit there idling. As I got out of the car, a man had pulled over on the side of the road.

He yelled to me to ask if I needed somewhere warm to wait for a tow.

With my boots soaked from crawling out of the car on the passenger side, I quickly accepted the offer.

THOMAS SMITH
Editor

The man introduced himself to me as Donnie (or Donny, I did not get the spelling).

I hastily called CAA to get a tow.

The operator said that the tow truck would be there in 45 minutes.

That let me get to know Donnie for a bit. I figured it would not be long before I was freed.

Donnie is a roofer. He was on the job, but the roof was getting slicker and slicker and he decided to go home for the day.

From afar, Donnie saw me slide off the road into the ditch.

Without a moment of hesitation, he stopped to make sure I was okay.

"It's how I was raised," he told me.

Growing up in Haliburton, Donnie said that throughout his life he was taught that neighbours should always help neighbours.

If you see someone in trouble, you should try your best and help. Simple as that.

An hour went by chatting with Donnie. Checking the tracking link CAA sent me, I noticed the truck was going in the opposite direction.

They said that the truck was coming from Lindsay and had gotten stuck itself, or was forced back away from heading north on Highway 35. They were not sure and would send another, more local, tow truck.

I waited and waited. Donnie told me stories of hitchhiking in his youth and the ins and outs of the roofing industry.

All of these stories kept me busy. Kept my mind from worrying about the car, worrying about how I would get home, and where the tow truck was.

For two hours, I was granted a brief glance into Donnie's life story. He never turned his truck off, making sure the heater fought hard to keep me warm.

While waiting, an OPP officer, an ambulance, and countless other drivers stopped and made sure that I was ok. After three hours of waiting, Donnie's partner called and said that his kids needed to be picked up.

With no sign of a tow truck showing up, Donnie graciously agreed to drop me off at the Tim Horton's in Haliburton.

At Tim Horton's, CAA recommended that I find a place to stay for the night.

I walked over to the Lakeview Motel, where I holed up for the night. Graciously, Harsha let me order dinner despite not having advance notice.

Tow trucks would not go on the road in the freezing rain. The roads were not cleared or salted for many hours after I had slid off the road. I received a call around 7 a.m. the next morning that my car was towed to the mechanic.

No damage was done to the car and I was safe and healthy.

Donnie refused any form of payment, despite my efforts.

Donnie, if you, or somebody that knows you reads this, thank you for your kindness.

I would like to buy you a coffee, if able. I do not know your last name and I cannot remember the roofing company that you work for.

Thank you for the stories and warmth while I was overwhelmed with fear and anxiety.

Toys

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE once said something about it being better to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. This is, and has always been my best argument, for having so many expensive slingshots and archery set ups.

Yet Shakespeare didn't hunt or fish as far as I know. Otherwise, he would have written plays titled "The Aiming of the Shrew" or "A Midsummer's Night Bream." Nevertheless, the Bard knew how important toys are to the outdoors enthusiast.

I only mention this because after Christmas the average outdoorsman or woman will have very likely added a few more toys to their collection. These might be firearms, bows, fishing rods, fishing tackle, or countless other items suitable for use in the field.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

The thing is, before we take them out on our adventures, we usually go through a process.

First, we call our buddies to ask if they have the same product – and for good reason too.

For example, I have one buddy who always buys the same GPS unit I do. This isn't because he thinks I have good taste or judgment in these things. Rather, it's because he knows that once I buy it, he will never have to read the instruction manual.

That works most times. But sadly, there are occasions when we are forced to do our own product research and make ourselves, through trial and error, proficient with it.

This should explain why, sometime this winter, when I start shooting ball bearings from my slingshot in hopes of knocking a pop can off the head of a snowman, I am not just doing it for fun. No, this is serious practice to hone my slingshot skills so that, should I find myself in a situation where I need to knock a pop can off a snowman's head, I will succeed. (You'd be surprised how often this scenario arises over the course of a long winter.)

Likewise, if you see me casting a new fly line on an icy road after Christmas, please know that I am not suffering from severe brain freeze. Rather, I'm negotiating the emotional transition from open water fly fishing to ice fishing. That's why, if you keep checking in on me, you'll notice I am using progressively shorter rods each time I go out.

The outdoorsperson in your life might be doing similar things. After all, it's not unheard of for a winter angler to be caught dipping the transducer of the fish finder they got for Christmas into the bathtub you are in. Rest assured, this is completely innocent. All they are doing is learning how to adjust settings so they can recognize the different types of bottoms.

Similarly, you might hear stories of a young outdoorsman with a new pen knife, asking his parents what they would like him to whittle the other three dining room table legs into – I mean there's no point having every one of them looking like something a beaver chewed.

Again, this is just part of the post-Christmas familiarization process that enables us to be proficient with the new outdoor tools Santa so irresponsibly gave us.

Oh sure, finding out what you can do with these outdoor tools is also always fun. I think the Bard probably knew this too.

He is the guy who famously pointed out, "The play's the thing."

InOtherWords

Columns and Letters to the Editor

What good looks like

WHILE I'M mining my history for inspiration and courage, it occurs to me that another mantra by which I live my life is What Good Looks Like.

Most, maybe all, dysfunctional systems focus on the problem. The health system: what ails you? The education system: what don't you know? The justice system: what punishment should we mete? The political system: what you did wrong or didn't do right (no question marks in that system, only exclamation marks!). Even the media that's supposed to reflect reality specializes in the down and dirty: if it bleeds it leads.

The problem with focusing on problems is that it makes them worse. It celebrates the bad. It makes us feel hopeless and helpless and useless. It sucks our life blood, we become walking dead. Walking dead can't solve problems.

What can solve problems? Well, first and foremost, intent. Posing something as a problem to be solved is step one in changing the world for the better. Any world: interior world (anger, anxiety, sadness), exterior world (two feet of snow on the driveway, uncooked meat and veg in the fridge, dirty clothes), my world (see preceding), your world (_____ fill in the blank).

FAY MARTIN

Poke, Peel, Pair, Ponder

I learned this from Nipon, a charming monk from Thailand who billeted at our house for a week. He entertained us with stories about his homeland and the challenges he faced trying to successfully settle people driven into the cities by circumstances in their home communities. I remember one story about the un-wisdom of designing housing for the masses that was several storeys high, presumably to more quickly and cheaply meet the need. Except the migrants brought their animals with them. And Nipon said, 'How to solve the problem of getting the goats to and from the third floor?' Always, his stories got around to 'How to solve the problem…' of the great and the mundane, including, as supper ended before the conversation, '…these dirty dishes on the table.'

He never said Shall we solve the problem? Or We can't possibly solve that problem. Or It's not our problem if they brought animals. Or. Or. Or. It was *how to solve the problem.* Intent.

So the second step, Nipon the Thai guru suggested, was to imagine what the solutions to the problem might look like. I have vague recollection of goats being hauled up by ropes from balconies, being carried up the stairs like sacks of grain – but very likely that's my imagination trying to find what might work to solve the problem, not the ones that the people who lived in those buildings came up with. The magic, Nipon said, was engaging the wisdom and experience of the people whose problem it was because their imaginations held the secret to success. They were motivated to solve the problem (intent) and they knew – or could eventually imagine -- what good looks like.

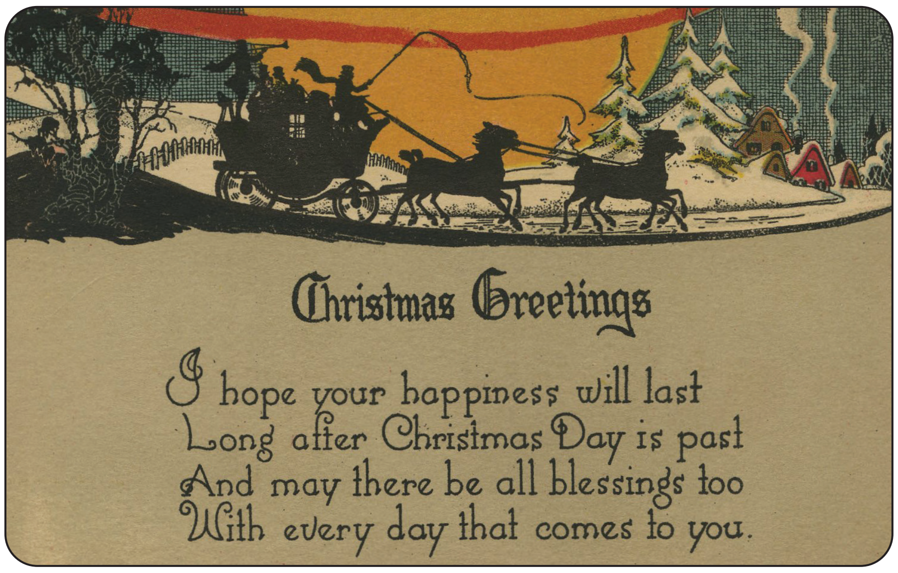
What good looks like was the second phrase that Nipon injected into my head for posterity and multi-faceted usefulness. He didn't ask what good is – that is easily a decade of debate. He didn't quibble about good enough versus not good enough. He insisted Good be tangible, something you could describe. And recognizable, something you would know when you see it. Something a group of people who are trying collectively to solve a shared problem could draw a picture of.

What good looks like is what might otherwise be called a goal, but it is a goal that will be recognizes when you have achieved it, which many goals are not. That certainty motivates the development and implementation of a plan. It may be a many-stepped plan. Each step requires a further fine-tuning of what does good look like and reviewing what is needed to achieve the goal and how the necessary can be acquired, etc. etc. etc. Step by step the little dog got to Dover. Nipon might have called it perseverance.

Nipon's third lesson? It's that change is constant, so you need to celebrate whenever you get to what good looks like. Why? Because you need to feel, at least for a moment, your power and potency and know that you are equipped to live life well. That optimism and self-confidence is important (and is what is missing from the walking dead) because we know that as soon as we solve one problem, another will make itself known. Because change is constant, in nature, in life. Which is good; things that do not change are boring or dead.

Nipon's lessons are a good frame within which to view a coming year that will almost certainly be challenging. How to solve the problem? What does good look like? Change is constant.

Minden Memories



Christmas Greetings

I hope your happiness will last
Long after Christmas Day is past
And may there be all blessings too
With every day that comes to you.

A Christmas Greeting. A Christmas postcard featuring a coloured drawing of a stagecoach heading towards a village. The back of the card reads: "To Rhoda, Florence, and David, Christmas 1930. With love and best wishes from all. Grandpa Mason." /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

Christmas greetings

This Holiday Season, whether you are celebrating Christmas or any other holiday, should be a joyous occasion. A time to celebrate with friends and family, a time to rest and rejoice, and a time to reflect on the past year and look forward to the next.

Be happy and safe as you enjoy the festivities and, keep a thought out and be generous to those in your community who may not be as fortunate as yourself this year.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas!

Bob Carter
Minden Hills Mayor

"On behalf of County Council and the Council of Algonquin Highlands, I'd like to wish everyone in the Highlands a healthy and happy holiday season.

Please keep in mind that we have folks in the County whose holidays could be challenged in a number of ways. If you know a senior living alone, please

Think of dropping in on them to make sure they're safe; or take a few items to the food bank to help those who have difficulty feeding their families. But

Most of all, enjoy as much time as you can with family and friends as they are the greatest gift of all. Finally, best wishes for a safe, healthy and prosperous

New Year."

Liz Danielsen
Algonquin Highlands Mayor, Former Warden

As we approach the end of another year, Council for the Municipality of Highlands East would like to extend our heartfelt wishes to ratepayers and visitors of Highlands East. This season is a time for reflection, gratitude, and celebration.

May your holidays be filled with joy, peace, and the warmth of loved ones. Let's look forward to a new year filled with hope, prosperity, and continued growth for our municipality.

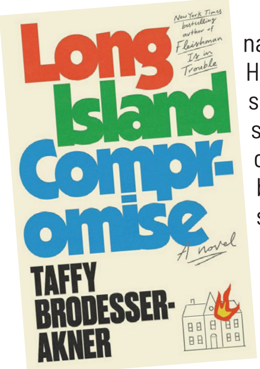
Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Warden Dave Burton and
Mayor of Highlands East

On behalf of Dysart Council and staff, we wish the residents and seasonal residents of Dysart a safe, healthy holiday season, and an equally prosperous New Year.

Murray Fearrey
Mayor of Dysart et al

HCPL's Book of the Week


New York Times bestselling author of Fleishman Is in Trouble
Long Island Compromise
A novel
TAFFY BRODESSER-AKNER

In 1980, a wealthy businessman named Carl Fletcher is kidnapped from his driveway, brutalized, and held for ransom. He is returned to his wife and kids less than a week later, only slightly the worse, and the family moves on with their lives, resuming their prized places in the saga of the American dream, comforted in the realization that though their money may have been what endangered them, it is also what assured them their safety.

But decades later, the trauma still lingers. As their fortune dwindles to nearly nothing, the Fletchers must confront whether wealth shaped their successes or doomed them to failure.

Long Island Compromise by Taffy Brodesser-Akner is available to borrow as a book or book club set from the Haliburton County Public Library.

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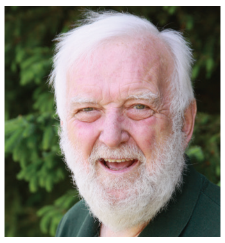
A modest proposal

RATHER THAN responding with disbelief or incredulity, (insert your own descriptor if you wish), to the suggestion from the United States president-elect, that Canada could/should become the fifty-first state, perhaps we should be taking another approach.

Allow me to suggest a modest proposal: Canada should offer to take the United States under our benevolent wing as the eleventh province of this wonderful nation. It would certainly be the charitable and right thing to do ... to save our neighbour and friends to the south from the turmoil that looms over the next four years.



JACK BREZINA
Point of View

First of all it would eliminate all this silliness around the porous northern border. The suggestion that the border is a popular entry point for illegal aliens sneaking into the United States for example. Or that the unprotected border has somehow used to import vast quantities of fentanyl into the southern nation. In both cases the numbers have been vastly overstated and, in comparison to the southern line, represent a mere drop in bucket in the grand scheme of things. And, by the way, shouldn't most of the responsibility for intercepting illegal crossings rest squarely on the country into which these people and parcels are going. Sure, as a good neighbour we can do our part to stem the flow, but why should the onus fall on us to intervene when the numbers are so small. Perhaps we should ask in return that they stop the flow of guns into our country, you known the ones that have been identified as playing a big role in shootings taking place on our city's streets.

Of course, embracing our neighbours as the eleventh province would simplify the annual exodus of weary Canadians to warmer climes in the southern reaches of the new province. No more lengthy waits at the border. No more mad dashes back to Canada to maintain citizenship status or health coverage. No more pesky and counter-productive threats of tariffs getting in the way to building a prosperous continent.

The benefits for our newest province are numerous. Here are a few: finally our neighbour to the south could embrace the rest of the world in measuring things metrically; They will realize how sensible it is to have one and two dollar coins rather than all those paper bills in over-stuffed wallets and purses; and we would finally see the Stanley Cup being won by a Canadian team. The last time was in 1993.

Perhaps most significantly, the citizens of the new province would see the multiple benefits of a single payer, universal, no-one-denied-treatment health care system. Many U.S. citizens look to the north with envy at a system, even with its flaws and attempts at erosion, that is built to keep people healthy not to enrich giant corporate entities. No, the universal health care we enjoy here is not perfect, but rarely, if ever, is treatment not given and there is only one card one need to present when seeking help, and it is not a credit card.

So, let's turn the whole suggestion on its head and invite our friends south of the border to join us a continent-wide nation, Canada. Who knows, just maybe Mexico might be interested in becoming the twelfth province.

HIGHLANDS OPERA COMMUNITY School

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YOUR STORY + YOUR MUSIC + YOUR COMMUNITY = OPERA!

ACCEPTING STORY SUBMISSIONS UNTIL JANUARY 15th. 3-4 stories will be chosen for the 'Let's Make Opera!' year long project and announced later in January (date TBD).

Send submissions to valerie@highlandsoperastudio.com

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VANDA TREISER INITIATIVES

How the Grinch stole the heated patio

The Grinch spent his evening as the MC for Boshkung Social's ugly Christmas sweater karaoke last Saturday, Dec. 21. /KAREN LONDON Staff

Welcome to Boshkung Brewing!
into his leather seat
Karafun

Rob Thibert sang his heart out while in his best Christmas attire.

Matt Renda looked on as Haley Boylan and her mom Kristen Glass kept the crowd signing while they showcased their voices.

Moose FM Holiday Radiothon a success

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

This year, 93.5 Moose FM's Holiday Radiothon raised $49,200.

For the past 18 years, the campaign has been raising money for food banks in Haliburton County. This year's Holiday Radiothon was the first one to take place over 12 hours, rather than two days.

The benefactors from the Holiday Radiothon included Cardiff Community Food Bank, Minden Community Food Centre, Highlands East Food Hub in Wilberforce, and 4C's Food Bank and Lily Ann Thrift Store in Haliburton. For twelve hours, Moose FM host Rick Lowes, visitors from the food banks, and other guests were on the air to raise money to provide food to those in need.

"Christmas is a time when you think of other people and your blessings," said Lowes, a long-time broadcaster with 93.5 Moose FM. "It is human instinct to reach out to help."

Hunger is something that everyone experiences. Without a steady source of food, it hurts, says Lowes. At this point, donating to the food banks around the holiday season is a long-standing tradition and one that Lowes says will continue for the foreseeable future.

"You can't sit back and know people are suffering."

This year's Holiday Radiothon is the 34th radiothon event that Lowes has participated in. He describes every radiothon as being fun and exciting.

The Moose FM location in Haliburton welcomed visitors to share their stories, enjoy Christmas treats, and spread holiday cheer.

"I am always nervous," said Lowes. "I want to do the best I can, you have a sense of responsibility to do the best you can."

Even with the nerves, this year's Holiday Radiothon was a great success. Food Banks Canada estimates that over two million people visited a food bank in March of this year. The year saw the highest number of food bank visits in Canada of all time. With the donations from Moose FM, listeners and supporting businesses, the communities in Haliburton County will greatly benefit from the access to healthy and nutritious food for the holiday season.

"Once again, we are absolutely amazed by the generosity," said Tina Jackson, the executive director of the Central Food Network. Jackson says the organization is completely blown away by the community's generosity and wishes to express their gratitude towards everyone that donated, and those involved with the Holiday Radiothon. As their operating costs and local need for food increases, Jackson says this sizable donation will allow those down on their luck and struggling to put food on their table. Central Food Network operates the Highlands East Food Hub and the Cardiff Food Bank.

"We cannot do this without the community," said Jackson.

The holiday season should be a time in which you can share with loved ones and family. Nothing brings happiness and warmth like a warm dinner.

Lowes and the Moose FM team would like to thank the outstanding support of the community. "Year after year, Moose FM listeners and the Haliburton Highlands community never fail to remind us of the generosity and kindness of those around us."

Thank you for letting us help you see great and look your best!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

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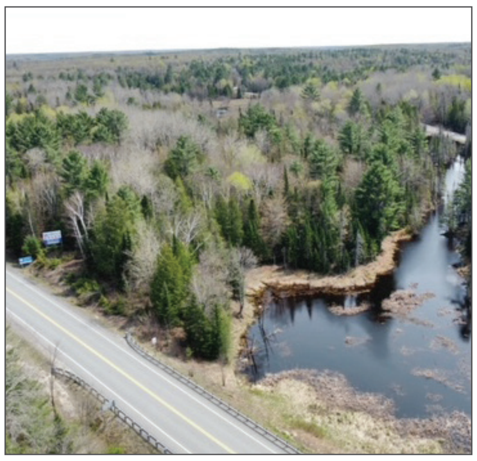

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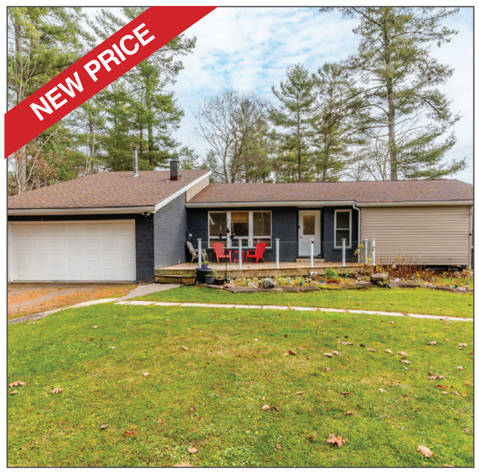

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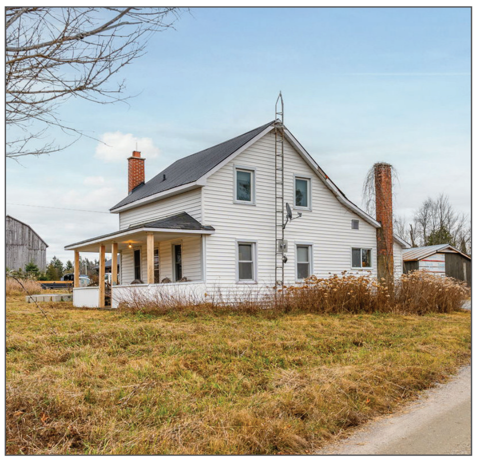

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- Vince Duchene

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season's greetings

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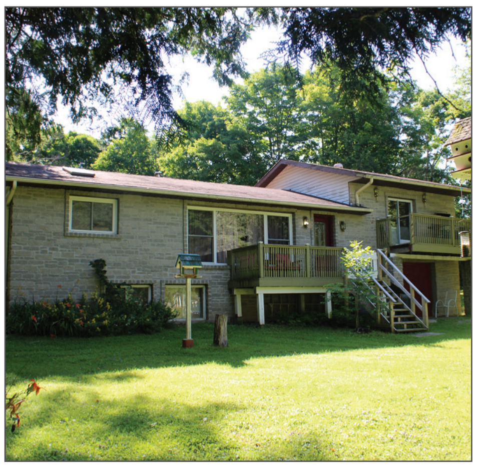

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Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

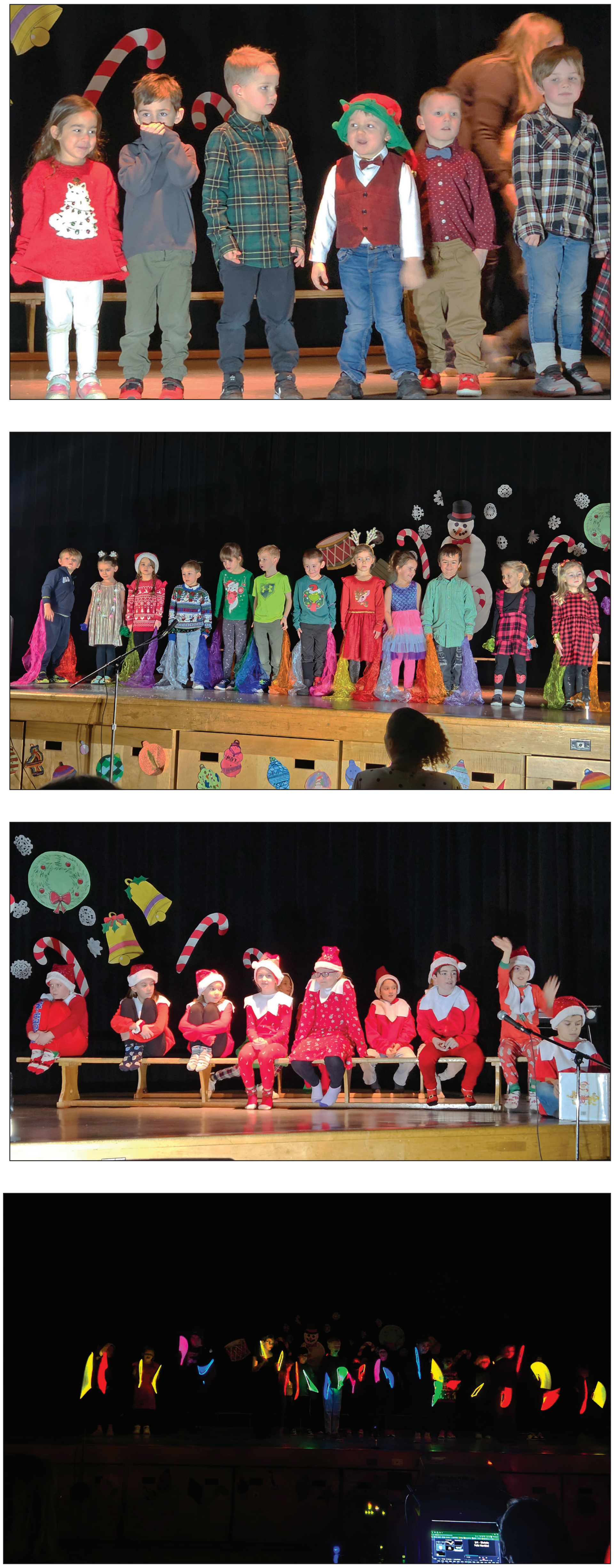
Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 17

We wish you a merry Christmas!

Classes of all grades sang, performed skits, and danced in the annual Christmas Concert at Archie Stouffer Elementary School held on Wednesday last week. /THOMAS SMITH Staff



Applicant(s): Hamilton
Between Concessions 6 & 7
Lot 6, McLaughlin Point Lane
Geographic Township of Stanhope

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands has declared part of the original road allowance between Concessions 6 & 7, Lot 6 (not travelled), geographic Township of Stanhope, in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, County of Haliburton, to be surplus.

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Municipal Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands proposes to enact a By-Law to stop-up, close and convey to the abutting property owner(s) that part of the original road allowance between Concessions 6 & 7, Lot 6 (not travelled), described as all and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Geographic Township of Stanhope, in the County of Haliburton and being composed of the following:

FIRSTLY: THAT part of the original road allowance between Concessions 6 & 7, Lot 6 (not travelled), described as Part 5 on a Plan deposited in the Registry Office for the Registry Division of Haliburton County as Plan 19R-11019.

The proposed By-Law will come before the said Council for consideration at its regular meeting at the Algonquin Highlands Municipal Office, 1123 North Shore Road, on the **16th day of January, 2025** and at that time, the Council will hear in person or by his/her counsel, solicitor or agent any person who claims that his/her land will be prejudicially affected and who applies to be heard. Any person who wishes to be heard by Council regarding this proposed closure must contact the Clerk to schedule a delegation with Council.

Dated: December 25th, 2024

Sean O'Callaghan
Planner
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Rd.
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Tel: (705) 489-2379
Email: socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca

Applicant: Konefat
Lot 27, Concession 6,
Ted Carr Lane, Maple Lake
Geographic Township of Stanhope

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands has declared part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 27, Concession 6, in the geographic Township of Stanhope, in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, County of Haliburton, to be surplus.

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Municipal Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands proposes to enact a By-Law to stop-up, close and convey to the abutting property owner(s) that part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 27, Concession 6, described as all and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Geographic Township of Stanhope, in the County of Haliburton and being composed of the following:

FIRSTLY: PART of the Original Shore Road Allowance lying in front of Lot 27, Concession 6, geographic Township of Stanhope, described as Part 2, 19R-11031; Haliburton.

The proposed By-Law will come before the said Council for consideration at its regular meeting at the Algonquin Highlands Municipal Office, 1123 North Shore Road, on the **16th day of January, 2025** and at that time, the Council will hear in person or by his/her counsel, solicitor or agent any person who claims that his/her land will be prejudicially affected and who applies to be heard. Any person who wishes to be heard by Council regarding this proposed closure must contact the Clerk to schedule a delegation with Council.

Dated: December 25th, 2024

Sean O'Callaghan
Planner
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Rd.
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Tel: (705) 489-2379
Email: socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca

PUBLIC NOTICE
Applicant(s): Van Namen & Smith
Lot 12, Concession 1, Boshkung Lake
Geographic Township of Stanhope

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands has declared parts of the original shore road allowance in front of Lot 12, Concession 1, in the geographic Township of Stanhope, in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, County of Haliburton, to be surplus.

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Municipal Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands proposes to enact a By-Law to stop-up, close and convey to the abutting property owner(s) those parts of the original shore road allowance in front of Lot 12, Concession 1, described as all and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Geographic Township of Stanhope, in the County of Haliburton and being composed of the following:

FIRSTLY: PARTS of the Original Shore Road Allowance in front of Lot 12, Concession 1, geographic Township of Stanhope, described as Parts 1 & 3 on Plan 19R-11021; Haliburton.

The proposed By-Law will come before the said Council for consideration at its regular meeting at the Algonquin Highlands Municipal Office, 1123 North Shore Road, on the **16th day of January, 2025** and at that time, the Council will hear in person or by his/her counsel, solicitor or agent any person who claims that his/her land will be prejudicially affected and who applies to be heard. Any person who wishes to be heard by Council regarding this proposed closure must contact the Clerk to schedule a delegation with Council.

Dated: December 25th, 2024

Sean O'Callaghan
Planner
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Rd.
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Tel: (705) 489-2379
Email: socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca

Children's camp group eyes Howland Lake site

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

A youth group hopes to start a children's camp on Howland Lake.

The St. Alban's Boys and Girls Club plans to start a proposed camp at a site located in Lutterworth on County Road 121.

A presentation during township council's Dec. 12 meeting was basically an introduction to the plan before a future request for a bylaw amendment to allow the development.

Amanda Dougherty, the township's planning manager, said the site once was the location of a camp in the past. The property was historically operated as a camp in the 1960s and 1970s when it was outfitted with a dining hall and 10 cabins.

Soon after the St. Alban's Boys and Girls Club acquired the property in 2018, the cabins were demolished and other minor renovations on the dining hall were carried out. A pair of docks were also redeveloped.

It's proposed that the overnight camp would operate primarily in the summer and be capable of hosting as many as 150 people per day. Overnight lodging will be by way of three cabins.

"They would intend to start small with approximately 20 or so campers and then hoping over time to grow to host up to about 150 people per day," Dougherty said.

The camp will include a ropes course, trails, sports playing field, and water-related activities such as canoeing, swimming, and fishing operating from two large docks.

The development would be done in phases starting with one cabin.

In a report to council, Dougherty said staff completed a detailed review of the application submission and comments were issued to the applicant.

"At the time of preparation of this report, staff are awaiting resubmission of the updated technical studies and revisions to the site plan," she said in the report.

Except for any wetlands, the rezoning would be limited to the area intended for the camp use with the rest of the property zoned Rural. The applicants also submitted an Environmental Impact Study prepared by RiverStone Environmental Solutions, which primarily identified wetlands on the property.

No new development is proposed within any of the wetlands and those areas will be rezoned to Hazard Land.

"No camp use will be permitted in those areas," Dougherty said.

Although building construction will be phased, the septic system will be constructed to accommodate the eventual maximum number of campers and staff.

Access from County Road 121 is existing and has been reviewed by Haliburton County Public Works staff through a submitted traffic brief prepared by JD Northcote Engineering Inc.

Melissa Markham, a planner from Huntsville, said the land in question is about 232 acres. About 40 acres of that parcel is the subject of the bylaw amendment request.

She said it will be serviced by private water and sewer systems.

"The lands are in a rural area which is to build upon rural character and provide opportunities for tourism," Markham said.

Councillor Pam Sayne said she's happy to see an effort to bring young people to the area.

"Hopefully they'll be sitting around this table when they grow up," she said.

She asked if there is any intention to purchase the shoreline allowance.

Dougherty said the shoreline isn't owned and the proponents are aware that they would need to buy the relevant portion associated with the camp in the future.

"They do have quite a bit of land along Howland Lake that would be quite extensive and they have submitted their application to move forward with that process," she said

Township of Algonquin Highlands

PUBLIC NOTICE
Applicant(s): Britton Capital Inc.
Lot 12, Concession 5, Boshkung Lake
Geographic Township of Stanhope

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands has declared part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 12, Concession 5, Boshkung Lake, in the geographic Township of Stanhope, in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, County of Haliburton, to be surplus.

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Municipal Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands proposes to enact a By-Law to stop-up, close and convey to the abutting property owner(s) that part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 12, Concession 5, described as all and singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Geographic Township of Stanhope, in the County of Haliburton and being composed of the following:

FIRSTLY: THAT part of the original shore road allowance lying in front of Lot 12, Concession 5, described as Part 1 on a Plan deposited in the Registry Office for the Registry Division of Haliburton County as Plan 19R-11029.

The proposed By-Law will come before the said Council for consideration at its regular meeting at the Algonquin Highlands Municipal Office, 1123 North Shore Road, on the **16th day of January, 2025** and at that time, the Council will hear in person or by his/her counsel, solicitor or agent any person who claims that his/her land will be prejudicially affected and who applies to be heard. Any person who wishes to be heard by Council regarding this proposed closure must contact the Clerk to schedule a delegation with Council.

Dated: December 25th, 2024

Sean O'Callaghan
Planner
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Rd.
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Tel: (705) 489-2379
Email: socallaghan@algonquinhighlands.ca

Deep calm and peace

LYNDA SHADBOLT
Special to the Times

ONE OF the loveliest practices in yoga is "restorative yoga." It is a favourite amongst yoga practitioners. We use props like blankets, pillows, yoga blocks, bolsters and towels (you can use whatever you have in your home) to support our bodies in poses.

Restorative yoga is about being fully supported in each pose, so that the body can completely relax into the support. Restorative yoga is a time when we practice relaxing. We want our brains to feel the whole body supported and held so that relaxation can happen. There is no stretching, strength building or balance involved in this type of yoga. There are 4 phases to every restorative yoga. In the first phase we set up our props and we land into the pose. Second phase we scan the body and make note of any areas that are tight, uncomfortable, unsupported and we make adjustments. We fidget and move as much as we need to so that we feel completely supported and comfortable and at ease. Third phase we sink into the quiet, the stillness and we let ourselves be held. I think of it as marinating in goodness, in quiet, in stillness. A restorative pose can last from 3 minutes to half an hour. In the sinking and settling we are teaching our minds and bodys to relax and rest. We give our brain something to concentrate on like our breathing, or the sounds around us, or the sensations in the body. I love to concentrate on the quiet presence of love that sits at the centre of me. It doesn't matter what you pick to concentrate on, what matters is that when your mind starts to wander (which it will) you bring it back to whatever you are concentrating on. This practice of being supported by the props and the earth is calming and soothing and settling for our nervous system which is the foundation of our well being. As we go into Christmas and New Years I know that it is important for me to pause regularly and in whatever shape or pose I am in, take a few breaths and relax. My intention is to enjoy the holidays and all that they bring. Things don't always work the way we want or expect them to, and so when I start to feel stressed or worried I pause and take a few minutes to relax. And then I respond. My house is a mess right now with paint by number projects on the go, a puzzle filling our table, wrapping supplies are stacked in our living room, we have an oven that decided to quit working, there are some health challenges with my parents etc. Madeline is home for a week and in the end I just want to relax and enjoy our time with her. So when stuff happens, I pause and I feel my breath and relax. I take little breaks when I need them. And then I step back into the life that is happening around me and I savour the goodness. The laughter. The joy. Things will happen that I don't expect, that is for sure. But I have quiet ways of relaxing my brain and my body so that I can navigate it all. Merry Christmas and all the best for 2025 everyone.

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Recurring events

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly
When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level
Admission: Yearly membership of $59
A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Bridge for Seniors
When: Mondays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Schofield Room, all welcome

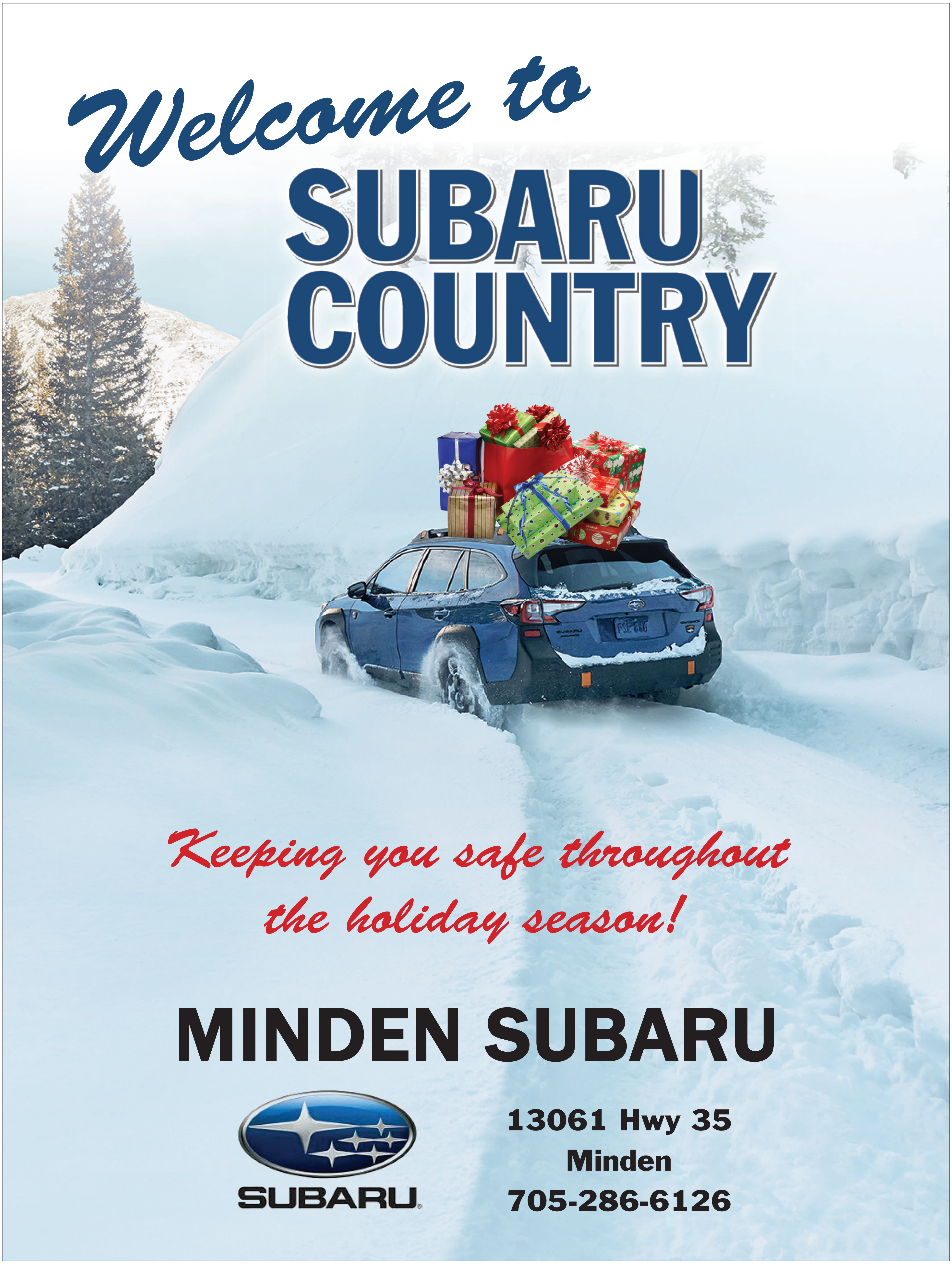
Haliburton Legion Walking Group
When: Mondays at 9 to 10 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
A safe walking environment. Lead by an Occupational therapist.

Free Balanced Fitness and Active Social Senior Classes
When: Every second and fourth Tuesday of each month
10 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All seniors are welcome. Group led by Registered Recreation Therapist

Bid Euchre
When: Wednesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All welcome!

Seniors Chair Exercises
When: Thursdays at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church,
617 Mountain Street
Please join us for safe and gentle exercises for seniors to help with balance, strength and flexibility. Free to join.

Cards/Euchre/Cribbage
When: Thursdays at 2:30 p.m.
Where: St. George's Church
617 Mountain Street
Lakeside Church Service
When: Sunday at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Where: 9 Park Street, Haliburton.
Whoever you are, wherever you've been, you are welcome here.



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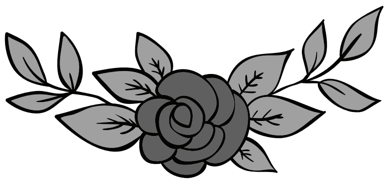

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650 OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Ellen Marie Holden

Passed away peacefully at the Hyland Crest Senior Citizens Home, Minden on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at the age of 96.

Beloved wife of the late Donald Frank Holden. Dear mother of Frank (deceased) and his wife Pam, Ken, Kathy Gibbard and her partner Rick, predeceased by her son-in-law John, Janet Moore and her husband Mel. Loving grandma of Kyle (Dany), Miles (Drew), Michelle (deceased) (Brian), Brooke, Trevor (Ellie), Shaun (Jackie), Jonathan (Linda), Stephannie (Dustin), great grandmother of Greyson, Kyra, Joey, Jakob, Orlando, Jared, Lindsay, MacKenzie, Emerson, Arianna, Gwenivere and Talia. Sister of Ruth and the late Ralph, Arthur, Arnold, Eddy, Esther, Doris. Fondly remembered by her many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

A Celebration of Ellen's Life will take place at a later date.

Memorial Donations to the Royal Canadian Legion Br. 636 Poppy Fund would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd. & Pre-Planning Centre

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory of

Norm Mills (1944–2024)

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Norm Mills, who died unexpectedly of a heart attack on December 15, 2024 at the age of 80. He leaves behind a legacy of adventure, dedication, and love that touched the lives of all who knew him.

A man of many talents and even greater personality, Norm made his mark as an auctioneer, known for his sharp wit and magnetic presence. His voice was unmistakable, and his auctions were always lively and filled with energy. He was also an accomplished plane builder, a craft that allowed him to combine his technical skill with his love of aviation.

Son of Allan and Lorine Mills. Norm is survived by his sister in law Sylvia Mills (Bill Mills, deceased), and sister Margaret Mills. Brother in law to Don Fleischer (Sandra) and Joan and Chuck Acker.

Above all, Norm was a devoted husband to Betty and a proud father to Sarah (Jeff Miller) and Stu (Jocelyne Turner). He was a longtime dog lover and leaves behind his longtime companion Rocky. He taught all those around him the values of hard work, creativity and living life to the fullest.

Norm had a big heart and an even bigger personality. He was a man of great character, warmth, and humor, and his presence could light up any room. He was a lover of dogs, and his cherished companions brought him joy and comfort throughout his life. His favorite place was his cottage at Little Hawk Lake, where he found peace and relaxation surrounded by nature.

Norm is survived by his beloved wife, children, grandchildren, Isaac, Katie, Liam, Brynn and Eloïse, cherished cousins Jim and Mary, Jane and Jim Farrell, Helen Bull and many close friends who will miss him dearly. A celebration of his life will be held in the spring of 2025, with details to follow.

A special thank you to the talented healthcare team at Peterborough Regional Healthcare Centre who cared for Norm with great compassion.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Snowflake Meadows Animal Rescue and Rehoming (cheques only), Peterborough Regional Health Centre, Local Foodbanks, and Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation in Norm's memory and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

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9	3	2	5	1	8	6	7	4
5	4	1	6	9	7	2	8	3
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The Times
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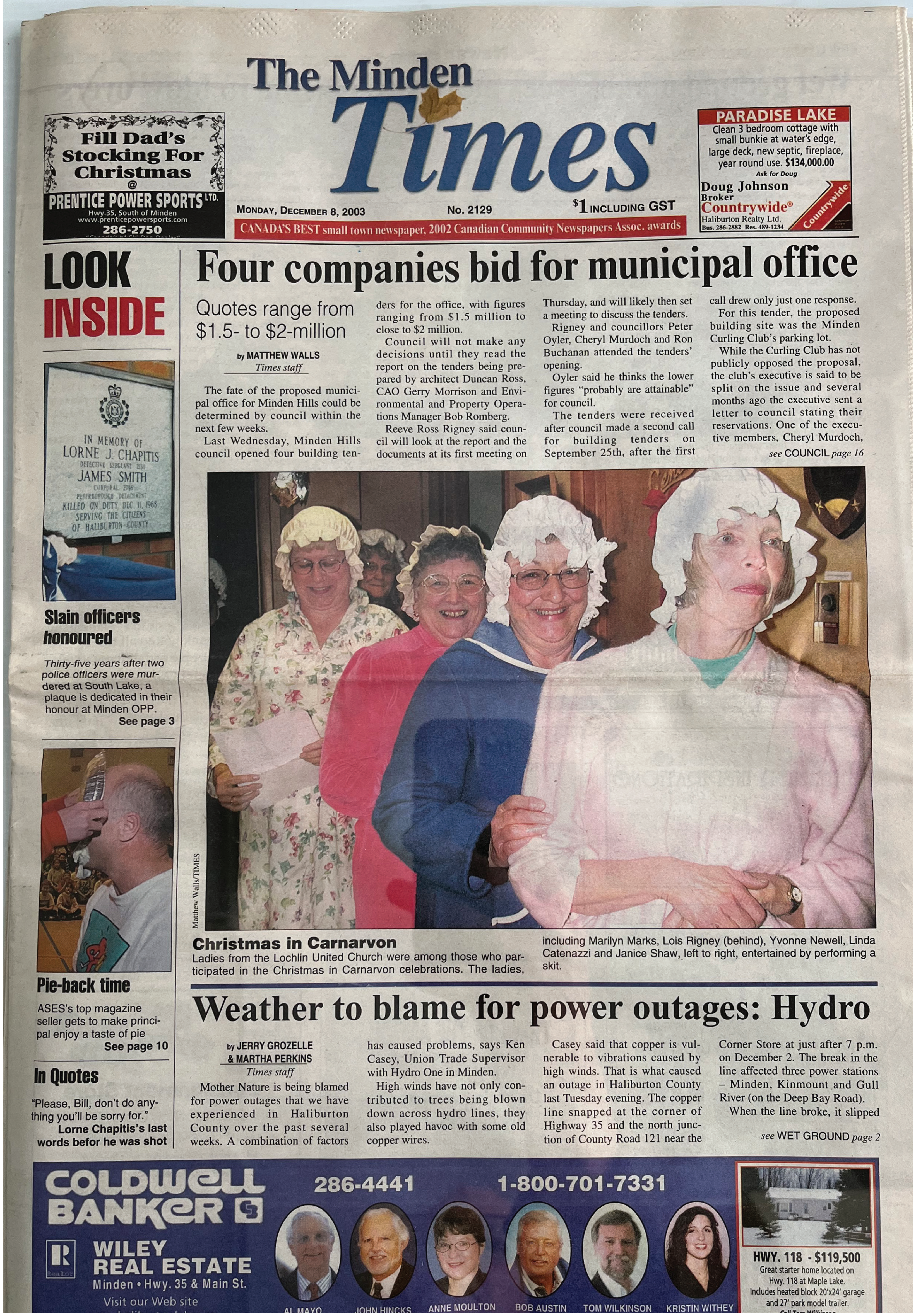

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Four companies bid for municipal office

Quotes range from $1.5- to $2-million

by **MATTHEW WALLS**
Times staff

The fate of the proposed municipal office for Minden Hills could be determined by council within the next few weeks.

Last Wednesday, Minden Hills council opened four building tenders for the office, with figures ranging from $1.5 million to close to $2 million.

Council will not make any decisions until they read the report on the tenders being prepared by architect Duncan Ross, CAO Gerry Morrison and Environmental and Property Operations Manager Bob Romberg.

Reeve Ross Rigney said council will look at the report and the documents at its first meeting on Thursday, and will likely then set a meeting to discuss the tenders.

Rigney and councillors Peter Oyler, Cheryl Murdoch and Ron Buchanan attended the tenders' opening.

Oyler said he thinks the lower figures "probably are attainable" for council.

The tenders were received after council made a second call for building tenders on September 25th, after the first call drew only just one response.

For this tender, the proposed building site was the Minden Curling Club's parking lot.

While the Curling Club has not publicly opposed the proposal, the club's executive is said to be split on the issue and several months ago the executive sent a letter to council stating their reservations. One of the executive members, Cheryl Murdoch,

see COUNCIL *page 16*

Matthew Walls/TIMES

Christmas in Carnarvon
Ladies from the Lochlin United Church were among those who participated in the Christmas in Carnarvon celebrations. The ladies, including Marilyn Marks, Lois Rigney (behind), Yvonne Newell, Linda Catenazzi and Janice Shaw, left to right, entertained by performing a skit.

LOOK INSIDE

IN MEMORY OF
LORNE J. CHAPITIS
DETECTIVE SERGEANT 2530
JAMES SMITH
CORPORAL 2716
PETERBOROUGH DETACHMENT
KILLED ON DUTY DEC. 11, 1968
SERVING THE CITIZENS
OF HALIBURTON COUNTY

Slain officers honoured

Thirty-five years after two police officers were murdered at South Lake, a plaque is dedicated in their honour at Minden OPP.

See page 3

Pie-back time

ASES's top magazine seller gets to make principal enjoy a taste of pie

See page 10

In Quotes

"Please, Bill, don't do anything you'll be sorry for."
Lorne Chapitis's last words befor he was shot

Weather to blame for power outages: Hydro

by **JERRY GROZELLE & MARTHA PERKINS**
Times staff

Mother Nature is being blamed for power outages that we have experienced in Haliburton County over the past several weeks. A combination of factors has caused problems, says Ken Casey, Union Trade Supervisor with Hydro One in Minden.

High winds have not only contributed to trees being blown down across hydro lines, they also played havoc with some old copper wires.

Casey said that copper is vulnerable to vibrations caused by high winds. That is what caused an outage in Haliburton County last Tuesday evening. The copper line snapped at the corner of Highway 35 and the north junction of County Road 121 near the Corner Store at just after 7 p.m. on December 2. The break in the line affected three power stations – Minden, Kinmount and Gull River (on the Deep Bay Road).

When the line broke, it slipped

see WET GROUND *page 2*

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